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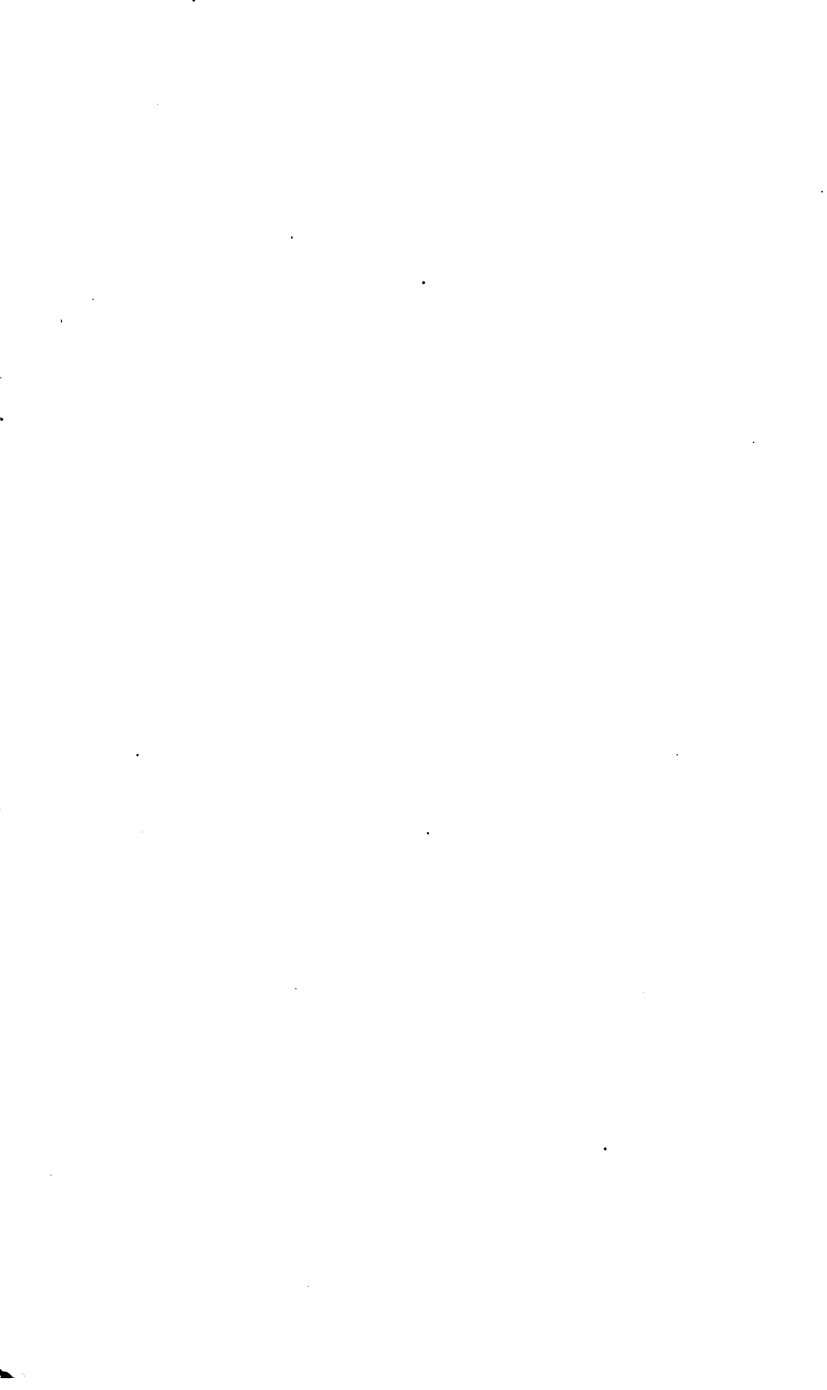
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A
SERMON
Preached before
QUEEN,

A. T.
St. James's Chapel,

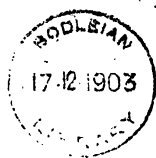
On Sunday, April 27. 1712.

By the Hon^{ble} HENRY FINCH,
A. M. Dean of York, and Chaplain
in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

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EPHES. ii. 18.

*For thro' Him we both have an
Access by one Spirit unto the
Father.*



IN these Words *S. Paul* gives us very briefly, the Sum and Substance of the glorious Privileges and Advantages of Christianity, the Ground and Foundation of all our Hopes, the Methods and Means of our Deliverance from an eternal State of Misery, and attaining a State of Happiness everlasting, above all *we can ask or think*. A Subject proper for our Meditation at all Times, as affording the truest Comfort in all States; and such Matter of solid Joy and Delight, as will add Life, Vigour, and Heartiness to those Thanks and Praises, which it will at the same Time prepare, incline, and, in a manner, *force us to pay to Almighty God*; and more particularly so, whenever we do more solemnly commemorate any Act of our Blessed Saviour, whereby He procured this Redemption for us. And, therefore, very proper for us at this Time, whilst our Church still calls upon us, in her Offices for this Day, in a more especial Manner to offer up our Praises to Almighty God for the glorious Resurrection of our Blef-

fed Saviour, *who by His Death hath destroyed Death, and by His rising to Life again, hath restored us to everlasting Life.* That we may, therefore, ~~more~~ more effectually call into our Minds such Thoughts and Reflections as may best promote that Joy and Thankfulness which ought to fill our Hearts at this Time, I shall now endeavour to help your Meditations, by laying before you what *S. Paul* teaches us in these Words of my Text. In which we may observe, *First*, The Matter, or the high Privilege and Advantage obtain'd for us, and to which we now have a Title, here styled, *an Access unto the Father.* *For through Him we both, i. e. both Jews and Gentiles, have an Access unto the Father.* *Secondly*, The Manner how this is brought about, *viz. Thro' Him; JESUS CHRIST, by one Spirit, i. e. by the Holy Ghost, [for so the Æthiopick Version reads, and the Sense of the Place requires it to be understood.]* In speaking therefore to these Particulars, I shall take this Method.

I. To shew what is meant by having Access unto the Father.

II. How this is procured for us by our Blessed Saviour: How it is that *thro' Him alone* we can *have this Access.*

III. WHAT in this is to be ascribed to the Holy Spirit; and how *By Him* it is *that we attain it.* And having briefly laid these Things before you, I shall then, by way of Use and Application, shew you, 1. How they ought to affect our Minds. And *Lastly*, How we may attain this Temper, and the happy blessed and glorious Fruits and Effects of it.

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I. By Access is meant a Liberty of approaching any Person, free Admission into his Presence, grounded upon his Favour, his Willingness (through his gracious Inclinations towards us) and Readiness to hear and help, and do good to us. And, therefore, the greater the Person is to whom we have Access, the higher must be the Privileges and Advantages *implied in it*: So that when we are told we have an Access unto GOD the Father, this must signify immense inestimable *Privileges and Advantages*. But this is not all we learn in this Place: For there are two Things besides, which set forth these Privileges as still greater, and make them *more dear to us*. (1.) That before this Access was purchased for us, we were Enemies to GOD, in a very hopeless desperate Estate, real Objects of GOD's *Wrath and Vengeance*. (2.) That this Access is granted us, not only as Persons barely reconciled, but in a manner which doth imply and signify the highest Benefits and Advantages which *can be received from it*. For an Access is granted us unto GOD, as unto our *Father*: Now we may approach Him as Sons, we are of His *Household*; and this implies the greatest Degree of Favour and Kindness, which the strongest Ties of Affection we have any *Notion of can give us*. (1.) That we were Enemies to GOD in a very hopeless desperate State, before this Access was procured for us, we need no better Evidence, than the Description which *S. Paul* gives of the miserable State we *Gentiles* were in before the Appearing of our Saviour in the World, in what He tells the *Ephes.* ver. 12. of
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this Chapter, That *they were without CHRIST, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without GOD in the World.* i. e. There being no Covenant of Mercy which ever GOD made with Mankind, but only in and through our Saviour CHRIST; and they having no Relation to that, neither had, nor could have any Foundation for any solid Hope of GOD's Favour, either in this *World, or in the next.* This, at v. 11. he bids them remember, and thereby appeals to what they themselves had felt, for the Truth of this Representation of the miserable State from which they had so lately been *deliver'd.* An Argument of the greatest Force, for quickning their Thankfulness to Almighty GOD, and making those inestimable Benefits they had receiv'd yet more *dear to them*; as Ease to Men in the greatest Pains, gives them the most affecting Sense and quickest Relish of the *Benefit of that Blessing.* Now tho', indeed, to us, who, thro' GOD's good Providence, have been born of Christian Parents, been baptized into His Church, and admitted into this Covenant of Mercy from our very Infancy, and so have never felt the Wretchedness of being in a State where we had no sure Foundation for our Hopes of GOD's Mercy to us, this Argument cannot have all that Life and Force which it had with the *Epheſians*, and other *Gentiles*, who had lain under those miserable *Circumstances*: Yet, a very little Consideration will be sufficient to convince any reasonable Man, of the vast Difference between these Two States, of having an Assurance of Mercy and Favour, from a Covenant ratified
and

and sealed with the Blood of the only begotten Son of G O D, and being left to uncertain Gues-
 ses, and our imperfect Reasonings *from the Na-
 ture of G O D*. Where, after all, we find much
 stronger Arguments for our Misery, taken from
 our own Sinfulness, and G O D's Justice, than we
 can for any Favour from *His Goodness and Mercy*.
 For we certainly know, that even eternal Pu-
 nishment of Offenders is by no means inconsi-
 stent with infinite Goodness, because then G O D
 could not have *threatned it*. For, to have
 threatned any thing which was inconsistent
 with His Nature, had been to have *threat-
 ned* nothing, since what is inconsistent with
 That, we are *sure can never be*. Nor could the
 Devil and his Angels *be so punished*. For, if
 G O D's Goodness did oblige Him to pardon Sin-
 ners upon their Repentance, it must oblige Him
 to pardon all Sinners without Exception, when-
 ever they do repent; and, consequently, the
 Devils must be *pardoned*; since it cannot be
 imagined, but that even They would certainly
 have long since repented most heartily, when
 they felt the Misery they *were brought into*.
 And, therefore, when Men have no Hopes of
 Mercy, but what will equally free the Devil
 and his Angels from their Punishment, surely
 their Condition must be very *hopeless and mise-
 rable*. And yet, this is the State into which
 there are too many among us would bring us,
 who denying all Revelation, and those Methods
 and Means of Salvation which G O D Himself
 hath, of His infinite Mercy, appointed and
 granted to us, pretend in a manner to prescribe
 Laws to our Maker, and oblige Him to accept
 of

of those Terms of Peace and Reconciliation which they *please to offer Him*. But my Business at present, is not with these miserable deluded *Wretches*. I am not to suppose any such to be here: Nor, if there were, can I think they would give any *Attention to what is said*. I am now speaking to such as, I hope, do heartily believe the Christian Religion. And, what hath been said, I hope, may be sufficient to give us such a Notion of that Misery, which We *Gentiles*, more especially, have been deliver'd from by the Preaching of the Gospel to us, as will give us a very lively Sense of it, and endear to us this inestimable Blessing which hath been procured for us, our Peace and Reconciliation to Almighty GOD, and Liberty of *Access thereby unto Him*. (2.) And yet this is not all we have to consider *in this Case*: For though we were Enemies to GOD, in such a desperate hopeless Estate as hath been represented, we have not been barely reconciled to GOD, or placed in some very low Degree of His Favour, which yet would have been a Blessing beyond what the best meer Man could, with any Reason, have hoped for, or expected; but this Peace, this Reconciliation which hath been purchased for us, is all along, in the Scriptures, represented to us as a State of the greatest Favour, and conveying to us the highest Benefits and Blessings, which can proceed from the greatest Love and Affection; for hereby we are admitted as Children of GOD, we are called *Heirs of GOD, and Joint-heirs with CHRIST*. To as many as received CHRIST, to them gave He Power (or, as in the Margin of your Bible, *Right or Privilege*) to
become

become the Sons of GOD, John i. 12. And again;
 I John iii. 1, 2. *Behold what manner of Love the
 Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be cal-
 led the Sons of GOD. Beloved, now are we the
 Sons of GOD, and it doth not yet appear what
 we shall be, but we know, that when He (our Sa-
 viour) shall appear, we shall be like Him.* I need
 not quote more Texts to prove this, which no
 Man who hath ever look'd into his Bible can be
 a Stranger to; nor offer to set forth what high
 Degree of Favour is implied in it, every Person
 almost having such an inward Feeling of the
 Greatness of the Affection of Parents, as must
 give him a clearer and much livelier Notion of
 this, than can be conveyed to him in Words. And
 yet the tenderest, most affecting Love of this
 Kind, comes far short of that which GOD hath
 declared towards those who are admitted into
 Covenant with Him, and adopted for His Chil-
 dren. For thus *Isaiab* says expressly, xlix. 15.
speaking in the Name of GOD to His Church,
Can a Woman forget her Sucking Child, that she
should not have Compassion on the Son of her
Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not for-
get thee. And this may be sufficient to shew us
 what we are to understand by our having Ac-
 cess unto the Father. I come now,

II. To shew how this is procured for us by
 our Saviour; how it is that thro' Him alone we
 can attain it. Now to shew, this all which can
 be needful, is to shew, (1.) That no Sinner can
 have any Title to GOD's Favour or Mercy, un-
 less it be from some Covenant or Promise.
 (2.) That our Saviour, by that one perfect Sa-

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crifice and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, which He made of Himself, render'd us Sinners, Objects of God's Mercy, and procured a Covenant and Promise of Pardon and Favour, of which He is the sole Mediator and Dispenser. And (3.) That God hath made no other Covenant of any Mercy or Favour, but by Him. For, if Sinners can have no Title to God's Favour but by a Covenant, and our Saviour hath procured such a Covenant, and He is the sole Mediator of it, and God hath made no Covenant or Promise of Pardon, but by Him; it must necessarily follow, that it is through Him alone that we can have an Access unto God. Now, that no Sinner can have any Title to God's Favour or Mercy, but from some Covenant or Promise, I think, is very plain: Because no Sinner, continuing such, can be an Object of God's Mercy: And if he repents, That without some Covenant cannot make him so. Because, if Repentance could of itself, by its own Nature, without any Covenant, render Persons Objects of God's Mercy, it must always produce this Effect in every Person, and so there must always be Place for it, and it could never come too late; and even the Devil himself (as hath been hinted before) could not be deprived of the Benefit of it. But we are sure, that there are Circumstances where there is no Place for Repentance, and that it may come too late: And therefore we are as sure, that *That* itself cannot render any Persons Objects of God's Favour, but that it is ever accepted, must be wholly owing to some Covenant and Promise; and, therefore,

fore, that without *That* no Sinner can have any Title to God's Favour. (2.) That our Saviour hath made such a Covenant for us, by which our sinners, though imperfect Obedience will be accepted, our hearty Repentance and Turning from our Sins so far admitted, as that they shall not be imputed to us, but be pardoned, and our Persons accepted and rewarded with eternal Happiness at the Day of Judgment for His Sake, is a Proposition which it would be needless to insist on in a Christian Assembly, these being the known and allowed Terms and Conditions of the Gospel. But that these are procured for us by His Death and Sufferings, and this Covenant founded on the Sacrifice He made of Himself, by which He became our only Mediator, may be proper for us to consider; not only because there are some who will call themselves Christians who *dispute this*, but chiefly, because the Consideration of this will kindle the highest Love in us to Him, shew us where to place all our Hopes and Confidence towards God, and how we may attain the Benefits of this Covenant which He *hath purchased for us*. For if His Sufferings were in our Stead, as greater Instance of His Love to us could not be given, so greater, more affecting and powerful Motives for our highest Love to Him cannot be offered. If by His Death He became a Sacrifice for our Sins, thro' that alone it is that we can have any Confidence towards God; through His Merits and Mediation only can we find Acceptance, and by Faith in His Blood can only obtain *the Benefits of this Sacrifice*. Now this will be sufficiently plain to

any one who will but consider what the Scriptures affirm in this Case, viz. That our Saviour

4) 1 John (a) is the Propitiation for our Sins ; That (b) His
 i. 2.
 b) Heb. x. Blood is the Blood of the Covenant wherewith we
 19, xiii. 12 are sanctified ; (c) through which we have Peace,
 c) Col. i. (d) Redemption, (e) Justification, (f) are washed,
 10.
 d) Rev. v. (g) cleansed from our Sins, (h) made nigh unto
 2.
 Eph. i. 7. God, (i) receive the Promise of an eternal Inhe-
 Col. i. 14. rittance ; and in short, that there is hardly any
 e) Rgm. v. Phrase made use of in the Old Testament, with
 2.
 f) Rev. i. relation to Expiatory Sacrifices, but what is ap-
 5.
 g) Heb. plied to the Death of our Saviour ; and, con-
 ix. 13, 14. sequently, there could not be a plainer, more
 b) Eph. ii. expressive way used, than what we find both in
 13.
 i) Heb. the Prophets and in the New Testament, to shew
 ix. 15. us that His Death and Sufferings were in our
 Stead, to make Atonement for our Sins, and
 thereby render us Objects of God's Mercy, and
 assure us of it. Read but Heb. ix. and you will
 find nothing more plainly affirmed in any Part of
 the Scriptures, than it is there. That as under
 the Law of Moses almost all Things were purged
 with Blood, and without shedding of Blood, there
 was no Remission. That as the High Priest went
 once every Year into the Second Vail to make
 Atonement, but this not without Blood, which
 he offered for himself, and the Sins of the Peo-
 ple. So also CHRIST being made our High
 Priest, is enter'd for us into the holiest of all Hea-
 ven itself, by His own Blood there to make Inter-
 cession for us, and by this means is become our
 only Mediator. In vain, therefore, do Men strive
 to cavil and criticize away particular Texts,
 when the whole Current of the Scriptures is so
 clear

clear in this Point. (3.) That GOD hath made no other Covenant of Mercy or Favour but by our Saviour, is expresly affirmed by S. Paul, Gal. iii. 21. where he says, *That if there had been a Law given which could have given Life, Righteousness should have been by the Law:* But that he shews could not be, and indeed sticks not to say, ii. 21. *That if Righteousness come by the Law, then CHRIST is dead in vain,* i. e. If there had been any other Means of Salvation, any way by which we might be accepted as righteous in the Sight of GOD, but by the Death of CHRIST, *that would have been needless.* But this need not be insisted on any farther, there being none among us who oppose our Religion, by the Pretence of any other Revelation or Promise of Mercy from GOD: And therefore, what hath been said may be sufficient to shew that it is thro' our Saviour, and thro' Him alone that we can have *any Access unto GOD.* But,

III. As it is thro' our Blessed Saviour alone that we have an Access unto GOD, so my Text tells us, that this is *By the Spirit.* Let us, therefore, now consider what in this is to be ascribed to the Holy Ghost; how it is *that By Him we attain it.* Now this, in short, is through that Sanctification which the Holy Ghost *works in us.* For though our Blessed Saviour died for us whilst we were Sinners, to redeem us from that Punishment which was due to our Sins, and restore us to the Favour of Almighty GOD; yet this was not to be done without our accepting Him as our Mediator and Redeemer *thro' Faith in Him,* and repenting of our Sins, and forsaking them, and
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leading a holy and virtuous Life, sincerely giving ourselves *up to the Service of Almighty God*: For nothing can render Men Objects of Mercy who are obstinate in their Disobedience, and wilfully careless of their known Duty; or capable of God's Favour, whose Wills, Affections, Inclinations, and Desires, are *opposite and contrary to the Will of God*. This our Saviour hath declared over and over; and there is nothing more plainly, or more frequently *asserted in the Holy Scriptures*. Now this Faith in JESUS CHRIST, this Calling us to Repentance, this assisting and strengthening such as are obedient to *those Calls*: The purifying our Wills and Affections, the suggesting to our Minds proper and powerful Thoughts, either tending to the restraining us from Sin, or encouraging us in *Piety and Virtue*; the adding Life, Vigour, and Strength to our Endeavours; and, by Degrees, bringing us to take Pleasure in our Duty, and all those Instances of it, in the constant Practice, Readiness, and Delight, in which consists that Image of Holiness, of which we in this Life are only capable, and can only render us such Disciples of our Saviour, as He will acknowledge for His at *the last Day*: This necessary Sanctification of us being expressly, in the Scriptures, ascribed to the gracious Influences of the Holy Spirit upon us, His working in us and with us, doth plainly shew, that it is *by the Spirit, thro' the Merits and Mediation of our Blessed Saviour*, that we alone have *Access unto the Father*, and obtain all those inestimable Benefits implied in it, and flowing from it. How, and in what manner, the Holy Spirit

it doth work in us, and with us; since God hath not been pleased to reveal to us, it would be in vain for us to enquire, who know not how one Spirit doth act upon another, nor wherein the Strength, and Power, or Weakness of Spirits, doth consist. Nor, if we could know this, could it be of any great use to us; since such Knowledge could not furnish us with better Means of attaining this Strength, or teach us how to use it better than we may learn from what is already revealed concerning it. No more than the knowing how our Soul acts upon our Body, when, upon an Act of our Will, it puts it into Motion, could teach us how to move swifter, or with greater Strength and Vigour, than without this Knowledge we are at present able to do. All therefore, which can be profitable for us to consider farther under this Head, is, what the Scriptures teach, concerning the Influences of the Holy Spirit upon us, either directly and immediately, or by evident Deduction from them, and what Instructions we may learn from thence; the Sum of which, in short, is This.

1. THAT GOD Almighty, by the gracious Influences of His Holy Spirit, doth communicate a Strength and Power to our Souls, enabling us to perform such Acts of Piety and Virtue, and attain such Habits, as of ourselves we could not do.

2. THAT this Grace, or Influence of the Holy Spirit, is promised us only so far as may be needful to enable us to perform such an Obedience to GOD's Laws, as He will accept, thro' the

the Merits and Mediation of our Blessed Saviour; and that it doth only excite and strengthen us to do this, not force, and compel us; and that Men may, and do (too often) resist it.

3. THAT those Graces, that Sanctification, which is wrought in us by the Spirit, He worketh in us in a way suitable to our reasonable Nature, and makes use of external, as well as internal Means, for the producing them in us. Such as the Holy Scriptures, Warnings of God's Ministers, Advice of Friends, Convictions of our own Consciences, and the various Methods and Events of His Providence, affording just Matter of our serious Reflection.

4. THAT as the Holy Spirit doth work in us his Graces, in a way suitable to our reasonable Nature; so also, doth he afford us a Strength and Power suited and proportioned to the present spiritual State we are in: Not giving at once, such a Strength as may produce all those Effects which the Scriptures ascribe to the Grace of God; but in such an Order, and by those Degrees, which suit with our Capacities and Qualifications for them. So that, tho' there is no doubt but God can, in an instant (if He pleases) change the most vicious Man into a Saint; yet, since He hath nowhere promised that He will do so, no such Measure of the Divine Grace is to be expected, any more than that the Sun should stand still, or any other the most miraculous Work should be wrought for our Sakes.

5. THAT this Grace is promised to all, who believe in Jesus Christ, and heartily profess
them.

themselves His Disciples. But this not absolutely; but upon the Conditions, (1.) Of their asking it of G O D in earnest devout Prayer. (2.) Of their making use of it, when granted, by their sincere Endeavours to act according to that Power they find and feel in themselves. For *to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath,* is the general Rule which our Saviour hath laid down expressly, concerning all the Means and Measures of Grace which ever G O D affords Men. This is the Sum of what we may learn from the Scriptures, of the Nature, Manner, and Measure of the Assistance of the Holy Spirit promised to all sincere Christians, and the Means of attaining it; and is, I think, abundantly sufficient for all the profitable Ends and Uses of any Enquiry we could make about it. I shall, therefore, now proceed to the Use and Application of what hath been said, by shewing you, 1. How these Things ought to affect us: And *lastly*, How we may attain this Temper of Mind, and the happy, blessed, and glorious Fruits and Effects of it. Now, these Things ought to affect us, 1. With a hearty and entire Love of G O D, and a Mind continually disposed to pay Him all Thanks and Praises, and to glorify His Holy Name, not only *with our Lips, but in our Lives.* This, I say, these Things ought first to affect us with, because Love and Thankfulness are the most natural, immediate, and almost necessary Effects of the Sense of any Benefit received: And greater Benefits cannot be conceived, than what we have received from G O D by our Blessed Saviour, in that gracious Covenant He hath made for us, and shall finally be Par-

takers of, thro' His Merits and Mediation, unless we wilfully reject them. So that nothing but unpardonable Infidelity, gross Stupidity, or wretched Thoughtlessness, can hinder this Effect from being produced in us. I need not repeat what I said in the Beginning of my Discourse, both concerning the Wretchedness of the State we have been deliver'd from, and the unspeakable Blessedness of that we are called to, and that infinite Love and Condescension in our Blessed Saviour, whereby He purchased this for us. If the delivering us from eternal Misery and Torment, and procuring, and, with His own Blood, purchasing for us Mansions of everlasting Bliss and Happiness, cannot affect us with Love to our Redeemer, 'tis certain our Minds are in too devilish a Disposition for us ever to be Objects of the least Degree of His Mercy. 2. As these Things ought to affect us with Love and Thankfulness to God and our Saviour, so likewise with an awful reverential Fear of offending him, such as the dearest, best beloved Children bear towards their Parents, whose Carefulness to please and obey, seems rather to be excited by the Dread of grieving and offending so much Goodness, than the Prospect of the Severity of Punishment, which must be due to such Baseness. That dreadful Vengeance which will one Day be executed upon all impenitent Sinners, is what ought never to be forgotten, as being the most awakening Consideration to the most harden'd profligate Sinners. But this Filial Fear of offending God, which arises from a Desire to please Him, and a Delight in our Duty, is what ought to be constantly cherish'd and kept alive in us ;

for

for it will produce the most perfect and acceptable Obedience ; it naturally results from it, and will keep alive in our Hearts, the Love of G O D, a Sense of His Goodness, and those inestimable Benefits He hath and will bestow upon us : For, indeed, this is but an Act of the truest and sincerest Love of G O D ; and all Acts strengthen Habits of any Kind. 3. What hath been said on the Third Head, in relation to the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, ought to affect our Minds with Courage and Resolution, in respect both to the Dangers and Difficulties we may meet with in the Course of our Duty ; and with great Watchfulness and Diligence in the Use of our own Endeavours, and that Power G O D is pleased to grant us. We are sure, nothing can befall us, but by the Providence of G O D ; and we are as sure, that He will permit nothing to come to His faithful Servants, which He will not so strengthen them under, that they shall be able to bear it, and that with great Advantage to themselves. If the Afflictions of this World, which are truly light, because they can last but for a Moment, in Comparison of Eternity, *do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, there is no Cause why any Christian should fear them, so as to shrink under them, or desert the least Part of his Duty to avoid them. And if, considering the Assistance which is promised, no Christian ought to fear the greatest Evils which can come to him in this World ; how ought we to blush and be confounded, when we find every little Trifle ready to turn us out of the Way of our Duty ? When the Laughs and Jeers of wicked Men shall make us almost ashamed to own our Profession ? Nay,

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the Fear of being thought lingual or ill-bred, shall make Men comply with very suspicious Practices, if not directly sinful. This very Consideration that such trifling Temptations have such a Force and Influence upon us, is what ought to keep us sufficiently humble, as shewing what weak contemptible Creatures we are in ourselves, and, at the same Time, teach us to be very watchful and diligent in our Endeavours, when we find every thing almost which we meet with, either leading or driving us into one Sin or other. . We have heard and know, that all the Influences of the Holy Spirit which we can hope for, are only such as are properly called *Assistances*: That He works in us, in a way suitable to our reasonable Natures and Proportions, these Aids to the present spiritual State we are in, and either adds, or withdraws His Grace, as Men make use of or abuse it. So that if we expect any Benefit from this, we must be very watchful, not only against the several Temptations we meet with, and exert all our Force against them; but also, careful to observe the several Ways and Means which are any way offer'd us, of improving and growing stronger in Virtue: (for otherwise we do not make use of the Grace God affords us) And these will be abundantly afforded to every Person who out of a hearty Belief of God's Love to Mankind in our Blessed Saviour, endeavours to keep up such a lively Sense of it, that his Mind may be continually disposed to pay Him all the Thanks and Praises which a Heart affected with an entire Love of Him, can express or suggest; and out of an awful Fear of offending against so much Love, keeps a con-

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tinual Watch over his Actions; and sensible of his own Weakness and Vileness, earnestly prays for the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, and in assurance of such a Measure of it as may be proper for him, exerts his own Endeavours heartily and sincerely. And this is, in short, that Temper of Mind, which the Consideration of that *Access*, which is granted us *to the Father, thro' the Son, by the Holy Spirit*, ought to affect us with. Let us, therefore, now, in the last place, consider, how we may best attain this, and the happy, blessed, and glorious Fruits and Effects of it. And the Directions I have now to offer in this case, (next to the solemn devout Prayer in private, with which we ought to begin, and end, every day, and our due Attendance on the Publick Worship of God, and frequent Participation of the Holy Sacrament) are briefly these Three: Frequent Meditation; Weaning our Affections from the things of this World; and acting in every thing as unto God. Now by Meditation here, I do not mean so much that serious Recollection and Pondering in our Minds, the Matter, Ground, and Reasons of our Faith and Hope; the Representing to our Minds, the many various and most affecting Instances of God's Love to us; what Returns of Gratitude and Obedience these require from us; how short of them, all we are able to do, must fall; and, how much less we do than what we are able; the Shortness and Uncertainty of our Lives; and the near Approach of our Entrance upon an eternal, unchangeable State of Happiness, or Misery; and such other awakening and enlivening Considerations, as will be suggested to a serious Mind, withdrawing itself from all worldly Thoughts, and
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setting itself to meditate on these Things. This, indeed, is what every serious Christian will allow himself some time for, let the other necessary Business of his Life be never so great; and that too, not unfrequently. But this, I say, is not what I understand here by frequent Meditation, so much as that serious, tho' short Application, which the most busy Man in this World may make of almost every thing he meets with. This our Saviour hath taught us how to do, in a great many Instances of the most common Occurrences of humane Life, by the Application he hath made of them in his Parables. And indeed, such Reflections seem to be so plain and natural, that Men cannot need any farther Direction, than the Reminding them sometimes of doing it. Thus, how plain and natural is it for Men, when they see or hear the Importunity of any Beggar in the Street, to reflect upon the Coldness and Indevotion of their own Prayers to God; when the Thankfulness with which they receive a small Alms, their own Ingratitude for the Multitude of Benefits they have received; or, when at any time they observe, with Indignation, the Ingratitude of those People, and their base Abuse of their Neighbour's Charity, to consider how odious, in the Sight of God, and unworthy of His Mercy, such Behaviour of their own towards Him must make them? How severely doth the busy Diligence, and Solitude of Men after worldly Riches, upbraid our Sloth, Negligence, and Carelessness, in the Pursuit of the true Riches? How naturally doth our daily Bread, the most common ordinary Benefits we receive, lead us to consider the gracious Hand of Providence from whence we receive them, and the several

veral Crosses, Disappointments and Afflictions, in a manner drive us to look up to G O D who appoints them? In short, as the Hand of G O D is visible some way or other in every Thing we meet with, and there is hardly any Thing but will afford us Matter for Praise, Humiliation, or Instruction: If we accustom ourselves to make such Application of them, we cannot fail of keeping up a lively Sense of G O D upon our Minds; especially, if in the second Place, we endeavour to wean our Affections from the Things of this World. And this, not only by considering the Uncertainty of them, as well as our own Lives, the Vanity and Emptiness of all worldly Enjoyments; the great Snares, Temptations, and often real Evils, they are to us, and the like; but also, by acting suitably to such Persuasions; by a sober and temperate Use of them, always and oftentimes a very sparing one; by employing our worldly Goods in such Uses as G O D hath appointed for them, and by denying ourselves in Things we have a great Mind to, when we find our Wills growing too strong, our worldly Desires too eager, and our Disappointments too vexatious and uneasy to us. And *lastly*, If we act in every Thing as unto G O D, *i.e.* with Uprightness and Sincerity, as in the Sight of G O D, to whom we are to give an Account of every Thing we do, and He sees and knows the very *Secrets of our Hearts*. It is *S. Paul's* Direction, *Col. iii. 23. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the L O R D, and not unto Men.* And, indeed, this is absolutely necessary for every Person who would keep up any Sense of G O D upon his Mind: For there is nothing doth so effectually banish the Thoughts of Him

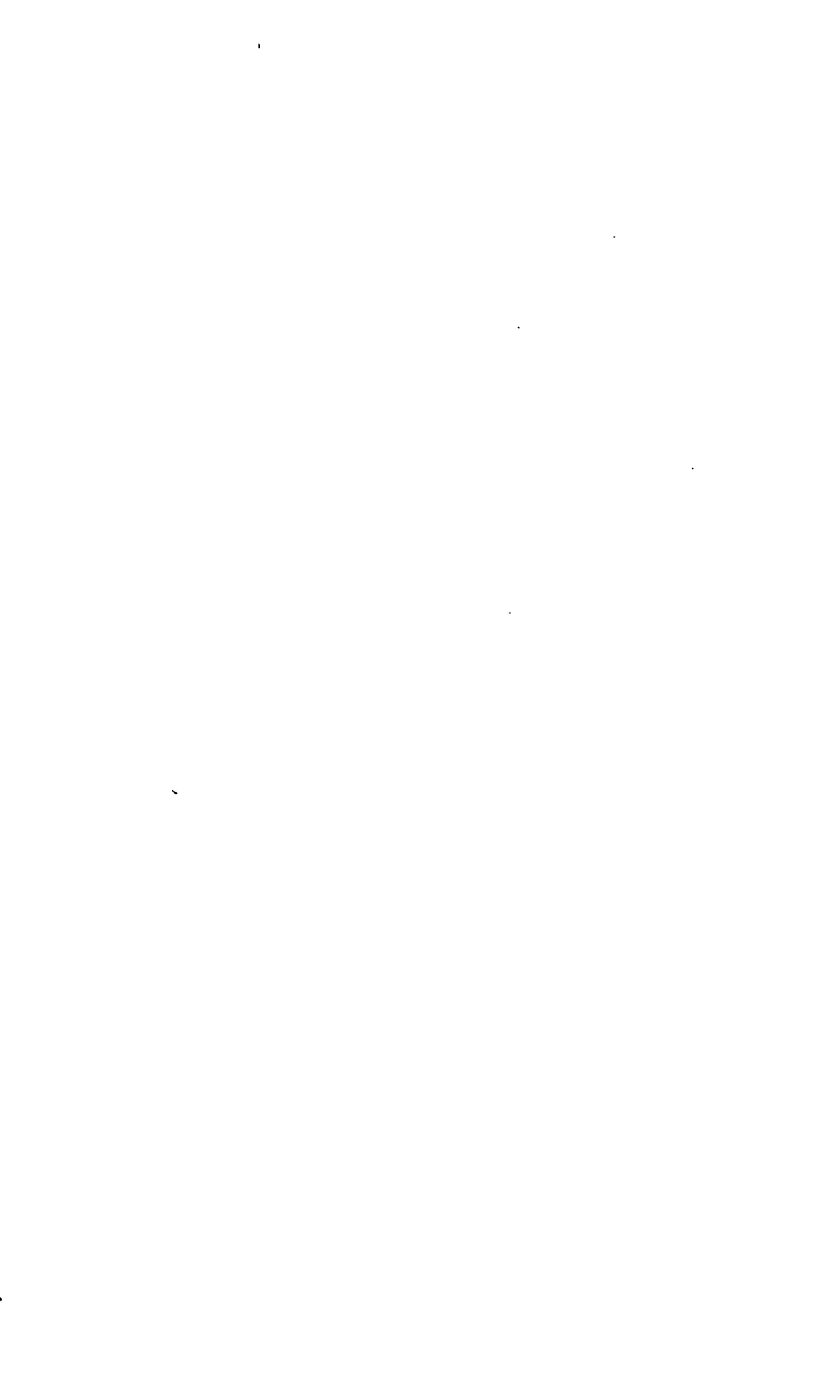
Him out of Mens Minds, as the Sense of Guilt, with a Delight in those Things which cause it ; because, in these Circumstances, Men cannot consider Him without Horror ; and then it is no Wonder that G O D is not *in all their Thoughts*. But when Men are conscious that their chief Aim is to serve and obey Him, that they take Care that all their Actions are innocent, the main Course of their Lives commendable, and in some Measure tending to G O D's Glory, according to the Station and Ability which He grants them ; that they allow themselves in no Act or Habit of any known Sin, but, endeavour to grow better every Day, by striving against the Infirmities of their Natures, and that Weakness which, by evil Habits, they have contracted. As they have then, through Faith in our Saviour, a Title to that Mercy He hath purchased and obtained for us ; they can then, with Comfort and Delight, entertain the Thoughts of G O D, and every Thing almost will bring Him into their Minds. Now G O D of His infinite Mercy grant, that we may make a right Use of the Means of Grace He affords us by His Holy Spirit, that finally we may have Access unto Him, through the Merits and Mediation of our Blessed Saviour JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

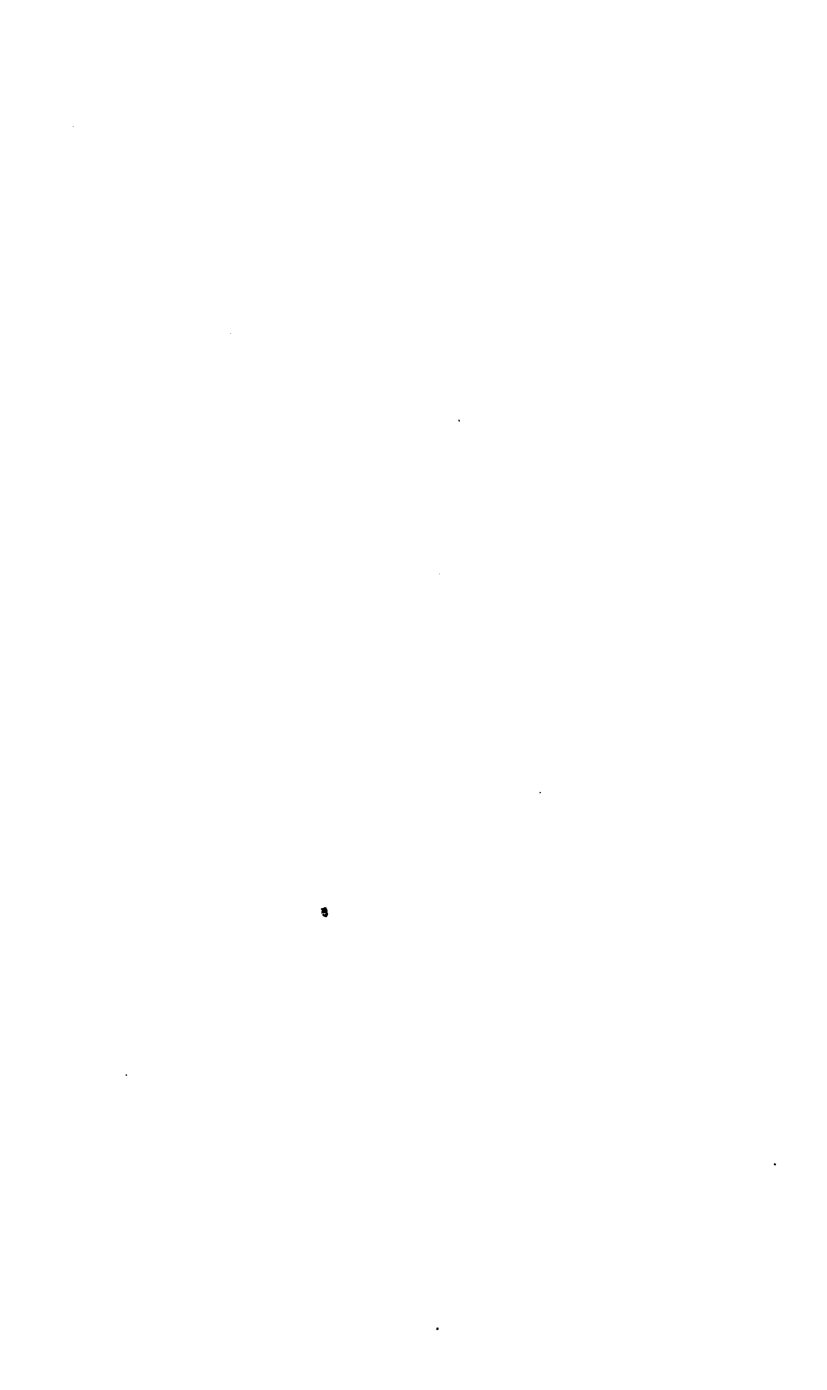
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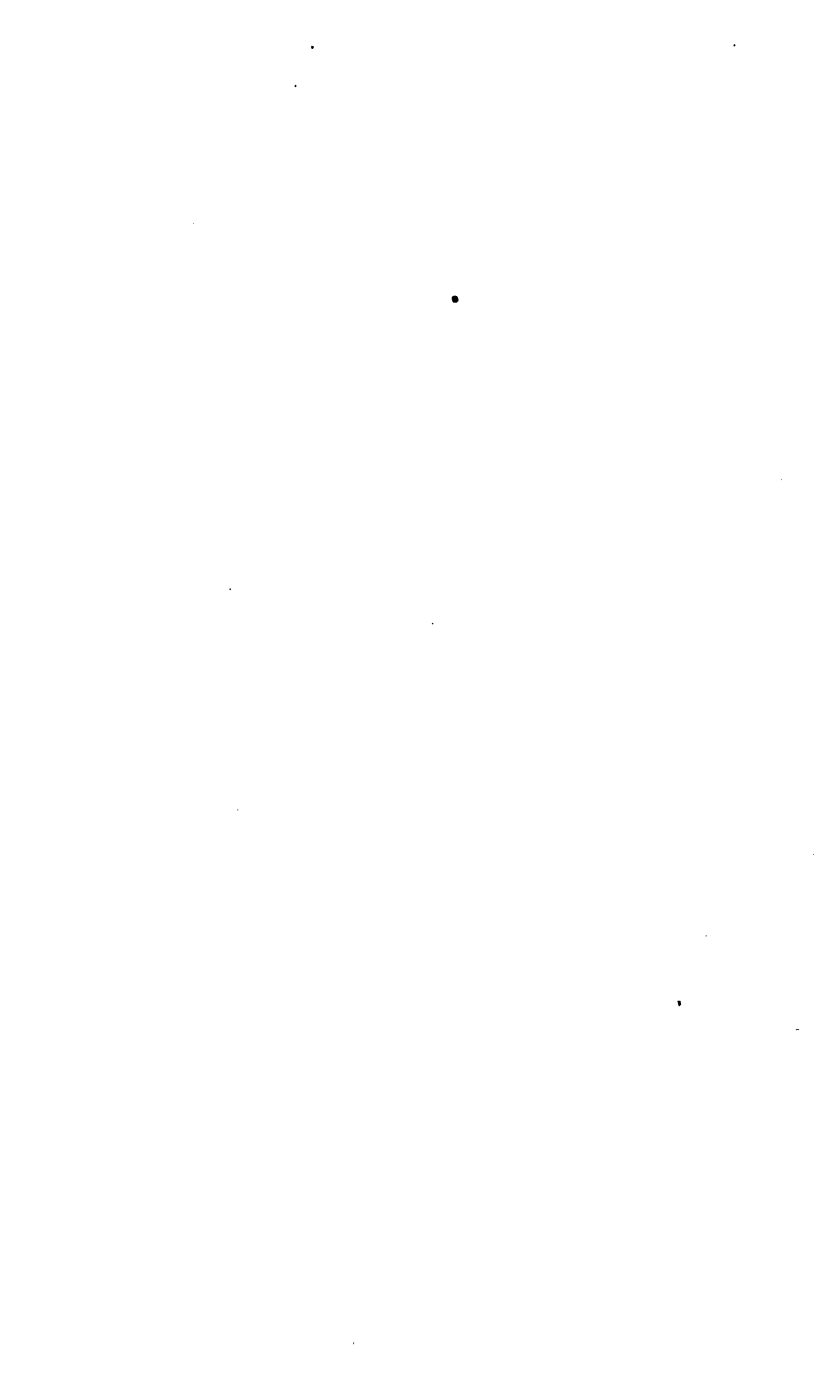
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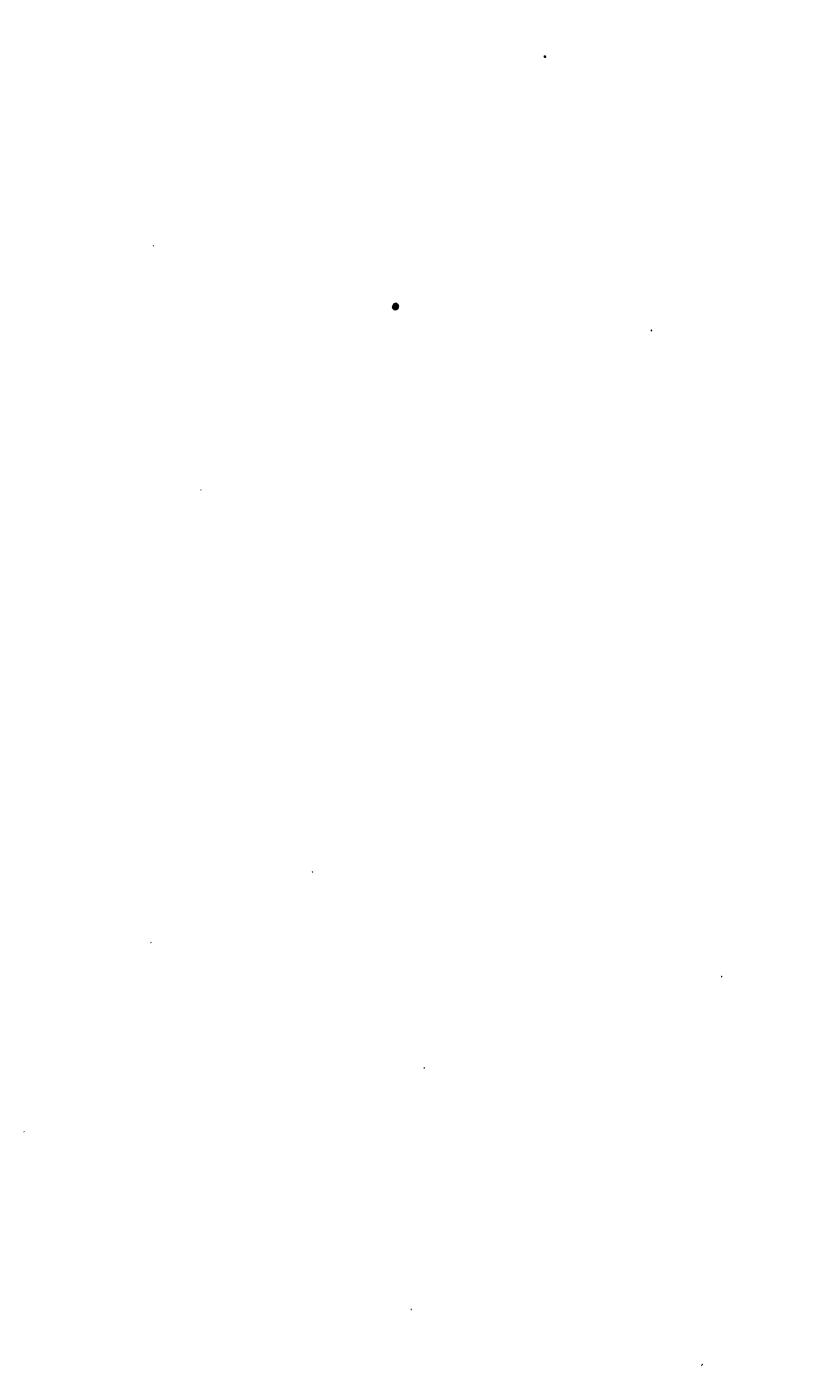
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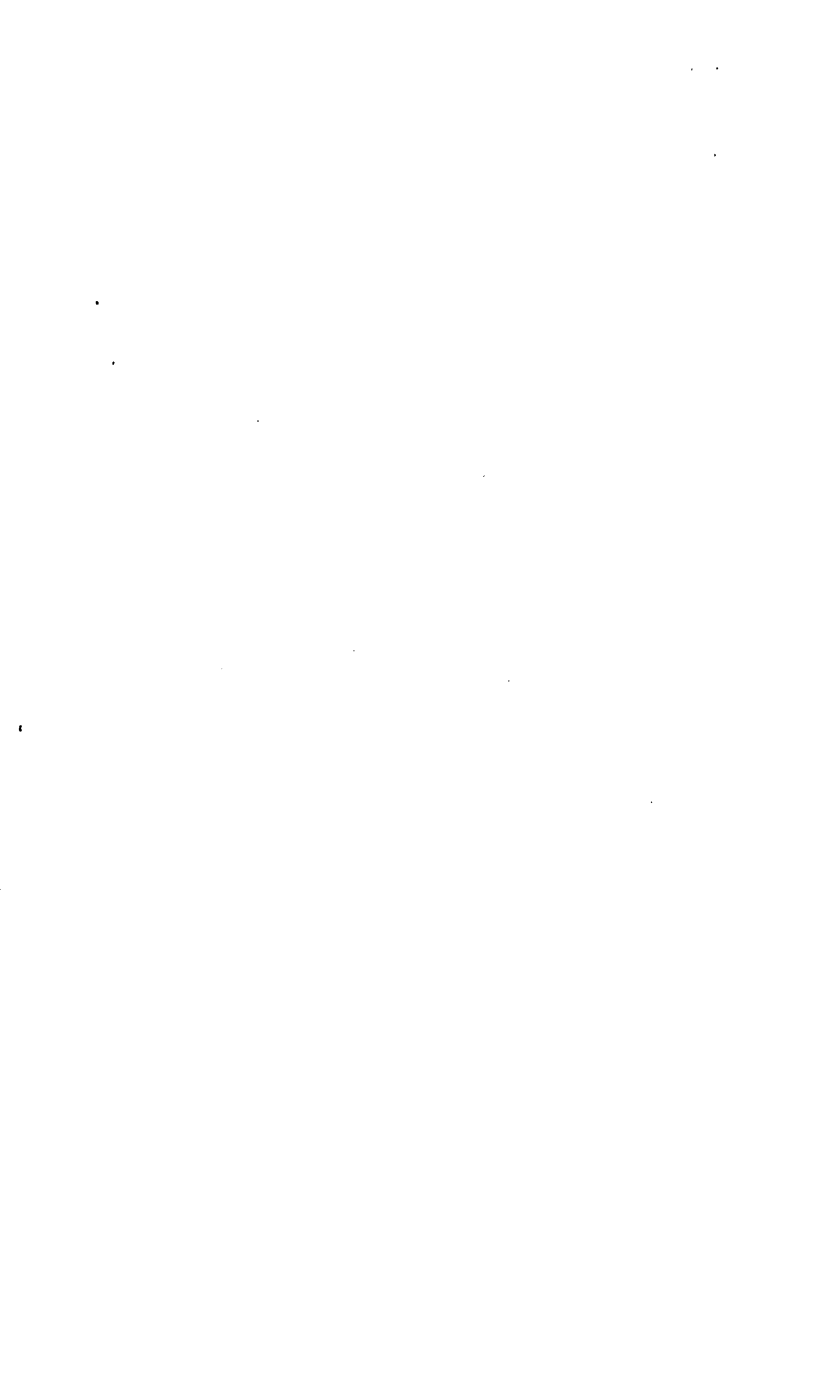




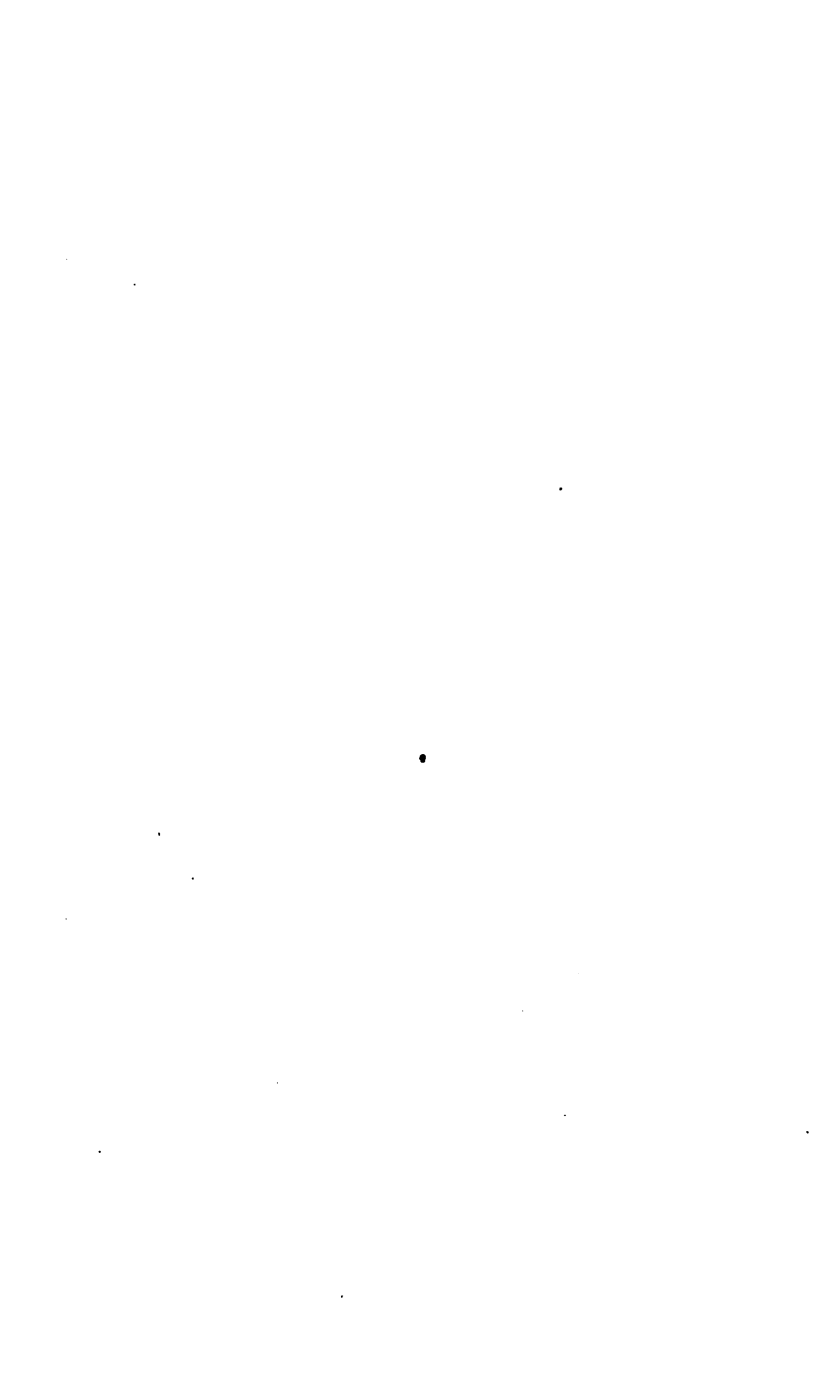












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